

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 01394 032149Z

16

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /105 W
----- 027578

R 032100Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8014

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 1394

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT NZ

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER KIRK'S HEALTM

1. DURING COURTESY CALL ON DEP. PRIME MINISTER WATT TODAY, I HAD CHANCE TO DISCUSS PM KIRK'S HEALTH. KIRK UNDERWENT WHAT WAS BILLED AS RELATIVELY COMMON SURGERY FOR VARICOSE VEINS APRIL 10. HE WAS BACK IN OFFICE APRIL 22, BUT SOON DECIDED HE WAS NOT UP TO RESUMING DUTIES. APRIL 25 HE DEPARTED WELLINGTON FOR LONG WEEKEND RESTING AND FISHING AT BAY OF ISLANDS. KIRK NOW RESTING AT HOME IN WELLINGTON. WATT TOLD ME HE IS PLANNING STAND IN FOR KIRK AT NEXT WEEK'S FEDERATION OF LABOR CONFERENCE AND AT LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE MAY 13-17.

2. COMMENT. KIRK'S ABSENCE FROM OFFICE IS GENERALLY KNOWN TO PRESS AND PUBLIC, BUT HAS NOT BEEN MATTER FOR SPECULATION. HOWEVER, HIS NON-ATTENDANCE AT FOL AND LABOR PARTY CONFERENCES IS BOUND TO START TONGUES WAGGING ABOUT HIS ABILITY TO LEAD PARTY AND GOVERN COUNTRY. AS A RESULT OF KIRK'S TRAVELS AND SURGERY, WATT HAS BEEN DE FACTO ACTINGPM FOR ABOUT HALF OF LAST FOUR MONTHS. WATT'S ABILITIES AND LEADERSHIP WILL BE PUT TO TEST WHILE STANDING IN FOR KIRK AT CONFERENCES. IF HE PERFORMS WELL,
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HIS POSITION IN THE LABOR PARTY WILL BE ENHANCED ACCORDINGLY.

WATT, IN CONTRAST TO KIRK AND IN CONTRAST TO WHAT EMBASSY
OFFICERS OBSERVED AS RECENTLY AS A MONTH AGO, APPEARS TO BE
RESTED AND IN EXCELLENT HEALTH.
SELDEN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, MEDICAL CARE, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
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Draft Date: 03 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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